ROMANCE UNLIMITED

By Mildred Cram.

Three Rogues—A Country's Treasure and a Ruler's Honor—Two Lovers
(Signor Pug and Miss Diego)

Illustrated by F. C. YOHN

PEACE reigned in Magella. Behind the narrow semi-circle of 'dobe houses, the mountains dozed like a row of sleepy and gigantic gods.

Like a tornado, revolution had swept across the city, leaving a trail of bullet-spattered walls and easily mended broken hearts. Royalist and nationalist had been buried side by side in the churchyard behind the cathedral. A mass or two had been said. And now—Esta 'bueno! Peace.

Behind the town, threading the old Indian trail, leaping a canyon, and climbing the stony flanks of the Santa Christinas, the American railway linked the gold mines of the interior to the seaboard. And twenty Americans slept side by side in the little cemetery at Dora Riparia, forgotten now that their work was done. Peace.

Magella's destiny, for the present, was arranged for. An uninterrupted stream of gold would pour down from the interior into the ships of the Fairchild Company. And the detested Yankee would continue to rule this little land.

Pug swung lazily in the consul's hammock. The air was sweet with tropic odors—flowers, fruit and the aromatic spice of the southern sea.

"Something is lacking," said Pug to the consul. "There is nothing to do. Everywhere I am safe. The sensation is disagreeable. Behold the spoils of victory—deadly peace!"

The consul smiled. "If you are hankering for excitement," he said "return to the United States. Magella has settled down to another hundred years' sleep. I recommend the corner of Broadway and 42d street. There is life. This is dream. When you are gone I shall climb into my hammock—which you have appropriated—and thank my personal gods for peace. It may be that I am growing old."

Pug searched in his pockets for a telegram which he tossed to the consul. "Read that. I must go back tomorrow. Another railroad—Alaska. And the paint not dry on this job!"

The consul clinked the ice in his glass. "Here's luck," he said, and drank.

"Thanks. Sure you wouldn't like to come along? New York—San Francisco—Seattle . . ."

The consul shook his head. "No—I've nibbled at the leaf of the lotus. I am tied hand and foot—a willing Prometheus—to this land of hot skies and orange blossoms."

Pug laughed and rose from his hammock.

"Magella's a great little country," he said. "Some day, when I've tracked my footprints around the globe, I'm coming back to buy me a 'dobe house, a banana tree, a hammock and a mouth-organ. But now my curiosity is unsatisfied and I have a thirst for the unknown."

"Starting now?" the consul inquired, climbing into his canvas heaven with a sigh of relief.

"Starting now. No doubt you've noticed that my eye quickens when I catch sight of a certain senorita of this town. My heart is invisible, but the quickening is identical. It's a new symptom."

"As long ago as Eden they called it love."

* * * *

"SO be it. But I know nothing of the ways of Latin-American wooing. She is completely surrounded by chaperons—a moat of fat maiden ladies in black shawls. Her windows face the Via dell belle Donne, and I find the street-of-the-beautiful-ladies cluttered with suitors. The poor child never gets any sleep owing to the nasal caterwauling of her admirers. When the moon is full, the musical rivalry is indescribable. Moreover, she is the president's daughter. Moreover, there is no easy way to her heart. Besides all of which, I must sail tomorrow on the Rough Rider."

"Hopeless."

"Not at all. Something tells me that she has noticed the quickening of my eye. Also that there's a heart in her. She's the sort of girl who would hold your coat while you fought the big scrap. And if you were down she'd stab your enemy."

"I wish you the best of luck," the consul said politely. "But I don't believe in miracles."

"I do," Pug answered. "Self-propelled. Whenever I want to start a miracle I get behind it and push." He grinned. "Four o'clock. At this hour Miss Diego and her moat move to the palace garden. Thither I go."

The consul opened his eyes suddenly. "I say—wait a minute. It—well—you see, in winning Miss Diego you are also acquiring Miss Diego's papa. Father-in-laws are a very important consideration."

"Unquestionably. What have you against Papa Diego—other than his whiskers,"

"Nothing tangible. Diego's political indiscretions are as elusive as the sand flea. His weaknesses skip from under the hand. You follow me?"

"Not exactly." Pug sat down on the railing and swung his feet. "Do you mean that Diego is dishonest?"

"He is gifted with the Latin temperament. In my opinion, Papa Diego has been plunging his hand into the national treasury. While you were away at Dora Riparia, a group of strange young men arrived on a fruit steamer. Americans, they were, of a breed familiar to me. Three of them; one tall, one small, one medium, and all bad. They sneaked by the gendarmes on tiptoe and engaged rooms in the Albergo Morgano. That night I went there, and asked the Signora Morgano about them. 'Si-curo,' she said, 'Here is the registro—You can read with your own eyes. Signor Br-r-rown, Signor Jones, Signor Smeeth. All from Nuova York. Ecco!' These gentlemen, I said, 'have they gone out?' 'But certainly they carried a letter to our presidente. This very night they, had audience with him at the palace. Such guests in my humble locanda?'"

"What has this to do with my prospective papa-in-law?" Pug asked.

"Shall I spill my suspicions?"

"By all means." Pug glanced at his watch.

"To begin with, I distrusted Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Brown. They did not pay their respects to the flag, which made me doubtful of their purposes. One of them is always sitting at Diego's side when he drives in his carriage in the Esplanade. The tall one is Brown, the middle one Jones. The little one Smith."

"What's their game?"

"Cards. They go where the boodle is—straight, as homing pigeons fly," said the consul. "The treasury of Magella is stuffed with American dollars. And Diego has easy access to the golden coffers of the state. His personal fortune is inconsiderable. His drawing account is dangerously elastic. He is popular. He has held the country together through two years of seething discontent. Because he is a great man? No! Because he is the breathing image of a great man! When he appears in public with his breast a-clatter with decorations he is every Magellan's idea of the liberal dictator, the ruler, the incorruptible hero.

"But the people are beginning to be curious about Diego's extravagances. His new carriage and the snow-white mules with selver harness, the statue of himself recently erected in the Piazza Independenza. The Diego chapel in the cathedral. But where are the promised public schools, orphan asylums, barracks and libraries? Diego is extravagant—openly, publicly, without thought for his reputation or his popularity. It is my opinion that he gambles with Smith, Jones, Brown & Co. for high stakes; and that the state pays for his losses. Have you seen him lately?"

"No."

"There are noticeable lapses in his martial manner. His eyes are unsteady. I'm sorry for him. The political wind will change one of these days and Diego will be blown out of office." The consul met Pug's eyes squarely. "Also—I have heard through reliable gossip that Mr. Brown, the tall scoundrel in the pin-check suit, has been making eyes at Miss Diego—"

"The deuce!"

"And that Papa Diego is unaccountably complacent. Amingo, I advise you to wait until the Rough Rider sails again."

Pug shook his head. "Impossible. There are three strings to my lute—fidelity, love and pleasure. I pluck them in the order of telling. I'm off to the Casa Diego to storm the moat."

He went out into the sunny street, whistling, and crossed the town to the Piazza Independenza. A sleepy sentinel paced before the door. Miss Diego, the servant said, was in the garden. Would the signore pass through the hall and seek the signorina by the fountain? The signore would.

"Signor Fairchild!" Miss Diego exclaimed, and gave him her hand. "This is the Signora Ortega, my aunt."

Pug bowed and sat upon the rim of the fountain. For a moment struggling politely with the Spanish-Italian speech of Magella, he conversed with the Signora Ortega. He was conscious of mischief in Miss Diego's eyes. She fluttered her fan and smiled behind it.

"The poor signora understands not a word," she said. "She is as deaf as the post. Talk to me in the English."

"I have only three words to say: 'I love you.'"

"So much—that you smile when you tell me?"

"I am smiling so as to deceive the Signora Ortega."

* * * *

MISS DIEGO shook her head and closed the little black fan with a snap. "You Americans make love of a strangeness. 'I love you.' As one says 'A very fine day.' It is not so in Magella. In Magella a woman lives but once—in the hour of the wooing. Afterwards. Chi lo sa? Quien sabe? Perhaps heaven, perhaps a stupidness for many long years."

Pug lowered his voice. "I love you."

"That is better. If you will says it every day for a hundred days, perhaps I will believe you."

"I am sailing tomorrow on the Rough Rider."

"So soon?"

"Will you go with me?"

Miss Diego lowered her eyes. Then her lids fluttered up and Pug saw a profound question in her glance. She looked away again, smiled, shrugged her shoulders and said: "I see. You are a business man. There is work to be done. You cannot wait to win me whom you say you love. Business is business. No."

"There is no player of mandolins in Magella who loves you as I do."

"How should I know?"

"By my eyes."

She shook her head. "Eyes tell nothing."

Miss Diego laughed. Her laughter was like the light music of a fountain. "Americano," she said, "love is more than just loving. Per esempio—My great-grandmother was captured by Lafitte and married to one of his buccaneers. They say that she loved him very much. Was he not bold and terrible; did he not give her pearls as big as the egg of the hen and diamonds cut in squares? She came back to Magella with the fearless one, scornful of less fortunate women who had married cittadini."

Pug laughed. "Marry me and I will do daily murder for you."

"Murder?" I speak of romance."

Miss Diego closed her eyes and tipped back her pretty head, so that Pug saw her throat circled by a string of jet beads.

"Also," Miss Diego went on, "my grandmother was kidnaped by a Tapadas—an Indian from behind the mountains. And my grandfather rode for three days and three nights and fought for her and brought her home. Later, he went to the camp of the Tapadas and stole their sacred fire and bore it, still burning, to my grandmother." Miss Diego's eyes opened and Pug caught their sidelong, mischievious flash. "It is not discreet to tell of one's family. But papa eloped with mama, thirty years ago. . . ."

"Ecco!" Signora Ortega cried suddenly, "Il Presidente!"

Pug turned—Diego was coming across the garden; with him a tall and gaudy individual in a pin-check suit. Miss Diego slipped her hand into Pug's and whispered: "This man who comes—Heart of my heart, I fear him."

When Diego approached, his daughter greeted him demurely. And she had so many smiles for the tall Signor Brown—for it was he—that Pug grew restless. Diego was sullen. He brightened when Pug said that he was sailing with the Fairchild Company's boat in the morning.

"Oh! You return to your native land. We Magellans are very grateful to you. But you must admit—our destiny is our own."

Pug smiled at this.

Diego put his arm through Pug's and led him toward the palace. "My dear sir, we part from you with regret. When you come again to Magella you will find her great among the nations of the world. Adios."

Pug glanced over the president's shoulder at Miss Diego. Mr. Brown bent over her.

Pug bade the president good-bye, and took himself to the piazza. There he sat with his hat pulled over his eyes and his heels dug into the hot sand.

"It begins to appear," he said aloud, to a sacred Indian child, who had toddled up to stare at him, "like romance a'la opera-bouffe. Behold me—pig-eyed son of a Tapadas! A New Yorker Twenty-six years old and in my right mind. Yet tonight, when the moon rises from the Spanish Main and the world is full of wildness and magic, I shall risk my unromantic Yankee neck for a lady's whim."

Pug strolled down to the beach and spent pesos liberally among the Carib crew of a small native schooner.

When the consul woke Pug was sitting on the railing picking tunes from a battered mandolin.

"Ah," the consul said. "You are here again—I hate to seem curious——"

"Miss Diego is sailing with me tomorrow morning."

"Have you told her so?"

"Not yet. Do you happen to know whether there is a priest on the Capo headland?"

"A priest?"

"You forget that I am going to be married."

* * * *

THE consul lay back in his hammock and laughed rapturously. "Oh, the simple-hearted young!" he shouted. "A wedding!" He wiped his eyes and said seriously: "A priest does live on the Capo headland, as a matter of fact. Town called Barrios—a handful of fishermen's huts. And there is, of course, a church."

"Thanks, Barrios. I'll remember."

Pug and the consul dined in the patio. When the moon filled the patio with a cold whiteness, Pug rose and shook the consul's hand. They parted casually, in the manner of their kind.

"Adios. Good luck, amigo. And don't trip over your romantic ambitions."

"Thanks. I won't. Good-bye." Pug ran swiftly up the flight of stone steps which led to the roof. It was 11 o'clock. Magella had gone to bed. Before Pug a semi-circle of white roof-tops fringed the harbor. He could see, not far away, the black tangle of the president's garden. Thither he went, padding lightly.

Looking over his shoulder he saw a schooner drifting like a moth in the path of the moon, tacking in a leisurely manner up and down before the beach. Farther out, the Rough Rider lay at anchor.

A very high wall inclosed the garden of the Casa Diego. Pug wriggled its entire length until he reached the palace. There, within his reach, was the iron railing of a balcony which faced the street. This he caught, and dropped upon a narrow ledge of stone coping, which encircled the entire residence. The street below was deserted. Standing upright on the narrow ledge, Pug cautiously approached Miss Diego's window.

A ladder stood against the wall. Caught in the topmost rung, a silk scarf fluttered in the light wind from the sea. Pug held his breath and, stooping, untangled the pretty thing. He groaned and peered through the open window.

"Nome di Dio!" a terrified feminine voice cried within. "Chi e? Who is it? Name of God, speak!"

Pug jumped lightly into the room.

"Hush!" he said. "Be still. I'm not going to hurt you. I am Mr. Fairchild."

"Again?" the woman's voice whispered. "Oh, Dio, again? I thought you had gone. Gone with my signorina, my darling, my little saint. Now you come back for me!—Go you—evil-eyed one, or I will kill you."

Pug struck a match. In the feeble circle of light he saw a dark-skinned native girl, crouched on her heels by the bed.

"You are not he!" she said, staring. "The first one—Oh, Dio! He said: 'Tell her I wait. I am the Signor Fairchild.' I told her. And she ran to the window—straight as a pigeon flies to its nest. She looked. She cried out. Then he took her. I watched. She struggled in his arms. He put her into a carriage and they drove—that way, toward the piazza."

"How long ago?"

"Ten minutes. Ah, Dio!"

The match flickered out.

"Ah, my little saint, my poor innocent dove, my darling one——"

"Be still. Open the door. I must speak to the president. Quick now."

The girl scurried to her feet with a gasp of terror, opened the door and ran down the lighted corridor. Pug raced at her heels. Some one had eloped with Miss Diego, and he thought he knew who it was.

The little brown maid servant pointed to a door. "Il presidente," she gasped.

Pug rapped sharply, and, receiving no answer, opened the door. President Diego's room was ablaze with light. The president himself, in the full uniform of an admiral of the Magellan navy (non-existant) sat alone by the table. Before him, four wine-glasses, many bottles, a stack of chips and a litter of cards. With every slow breath the medals on Diego's breast winked and glittered.

Pug spoke gently from the door: "Mr. President."

Diego turned his head. In that merciless illumination he was both tired and old, possibly frightened, or possibly ashamed. Then he got to his feet, flung up his hands and a shower of silver coins fell and rolled into every corner of the gaudy room.

"Signor Pug—This is an intrusion."

Pug closed the door softly behind him. "What sum have you lost to Messrs. Brown, Smith and Jones?"

"You are impertinent. Leave me, or I will call the guard——" His voice broke. "I refused to pay!" he shouted. "I refused. They threatened. What is a promise made—to scoundrels? I refused. And they have no way to make me pay."

"They have found a way already." Diego shivered. "I don't understand."

"Where is Miss Diego?"

"In her room. Asleep."

"She is no longer there. A ladder has been put up to her window from the Via delle belle Donne, and your enemies—no, Mr. President, your accomplices—have carried her away."

Diego shouted: "You lie!"

"Go and see."

The old man pushed Pug aside and flung open the door. At his feet the little servant fell in a crumpled heap. "Signor Presidente, my little dove is gone."

* * * *

THE consul's amateur psychology was correct—Diego had a passion for cards and he had lost heavily to the professional gamblers, who had come down from New Orleans to pluck the Magellan goose. Now and again he had won—large sums. Fabulous sums! Then, to restrain his wabbling courage, he had spent recklessly. A new carriage. A bronze statue. A chapel. No sooner won, than spent or lost.

This night, beaten and baffled, he had played again—and now he had drawn his stage from the government treasury and had lost. Ten thousand dollars. Had lost, and then, throwing the cards into the cast-iron faces of the Messrs. Jones, Brown and Smith, had refused to pay.

"They left me," he sobbed, "to do that—to steal my piccola santa, and to hold her until I pay. Tomorrow, mark my word, Signor Pug, I will hear from them. Tomorrow, not I, but my people, must pay for my mistake. Signor Pug, I haven't a peso! Not a centavo! Not a real!"

Pug reminded the martial hero that Miss Diego had been spirited away in a carriage. Cab horses in Magella were possessed of no great speed. Ebbene! Follow by all means! There were only two roads out of the capital. One led through the gate of San Pedro, across the alluvial plain and following the new American railway, pierced the canon. Beyond, there was nothing but wilderness; a tangled jungle full of marauding beasts, and then the desolate slopes of the Christinas.

Another road skirted the city, passed the fortress of San Martino and wound northward toward Porto Bio, the nearest town of considerable size, and the stronghold of a large party of anti-royalists. It stood to reason that the gamblers had taken that way. Men like Brown, Smith and Jones do not risk their highly civilized persons in such dangerous forests and canons as those behind the Christinas.

"Send Gonelli through the Indian trail," Pug advised. "If he should encounter your precious trio he will bring them back to you, alive or dead. I'm going toward Porto Bio. Can you give me the loan of a horse?"

Pug rode first to the beach. There he held whispered converse with a man who waited in a rowboat upon the whispering fringe of surf. The Carib nodded, held out his brown palm for silver, and pulled off across the narbor to that small schooner which still tacked aimlessly in the silver-flaked path of the moon. Pug watched until the fellow had delivered the message. Then the sail, which had a moment before been sable, swung to the fresh wind and the schooner moved away toward the Capo headland, snow-white, mysterious, silent.

Pug raced along the road to Porto Bio, mounted on the president's own white charger. Pug bent his head to the breeze and laughed aloud. Once he loosened the revolver in his pocket. Once he remembred what Miss Diego had said: "Heart of my heart." He blessed whatever gods there are—the gods of youth and the affable gods of love—for Messrs. Smith, Brown and Jones.

And along toward dawn, when the moon had called it a night and had knocked off, the big charger clattered around a bend in the road, stopped, quivered, expanded his nostrils, and played ring-a-round-a-rosy.

"Whoa!" said Pug, smoothing the martial one down with the palm of his hand. "Whoa, Alexander! Are you a horse or a ferris wheel?"

Alexander thought better of it and pranced forward gingerly and daintily, picking his way. It was as dark as a closet. Close at hand you could hear the whistle of many small waves on some pebbly beach. And there in the road, turned over on its side, was a public hack. Diego's war horse edged around it, snorting and quivering.

"Carrambos!" a sullen voice cried from the darkness. "What beast is this? Baboon, alligator, jaguar, or demon? Devour me; I can do no more."

Pug laughed. "Fear not, amigo! I am a traveler on the way to Porto Bio. What has happened here?"

"The worst. I sell my carriage and my horse to three gentlemen—a tall, a small, and a not so small one. Also, there is a lady. She screams and kicks like a she-demon. They tell me to drive like the wind. They pay. Each time I stop, they pay more. I wring them dry, like a sponge. Why not? My horse is dead and I am crazed with fear. The three and the lady go on—afoot. And may God go with them. I could not."

"How long have you been here?"

"Twenty minutes—perhaps more. I have an ague. I shall be dead in the morning."

Pug followed the fugitives as quietly as he could. Diego's charger had a tread meant to echo round Magella and strike terror in the heart of tepid royalists. Pug could see nothing save the dim white thread of the road and to the right, the occasional flash of the Capo light as it turned to sweep the harbor. Barrios, he knew, must be near at hand, for when he looked over his shoulder, he could see the lights of the capital—he was already upon the headland. He pulled the war horse to a walk. When within a stone's throw of the stony path which turned off to the Capo, he stopped suddenly.

A flicker of dawn had lightened the world; things appeared out of the darkness like the shadows upon an underexposed negative. He saw some people hurrying down the Porto Bio road—one tall, one small, one not so small, and, between them, a woman, who stumbled as they urged her forward.

Pug followed, his hand upon his revolver, joy in his heart. Then the tall Mr. Brown stopped in his tracks. He turned. There was a flash, an explosion, and the war-horse Alexander, struck neatly between the eyes, went down on his knees, rolled over, and while Pug sprang free, kicked mightily and died.

"This man Brown," Pug thought, "speaks eloquently with a gun."

He laughed, licked his lips, and crouched behind the towering corpse of Diego's charger.

It was evident that the fugitives had mistaken him for Diego. Pug heard Miss Diego shriek: "Papa! I am here!"

Mr. Brown advanced upon Pug's improvised barricade. When within ten feet he stopped and said: "Now, Mr. President, go easy. Hand me the ten thousand nice and proper, making no squeals, and we will head for Porto Bio, leaving you to the peaceful enjoyment of tropical politics. Stand up. Easy now."

The pin-chick suitor fired over the head of the prostrate Alexander. Then Pug lost his temper and, rising quickly, let Mr. Brown have it through the palm of his facile right hand. The gambler yelled, and flung both arms above his head. Pug possessed himself of the eloquent revolver and ran up the road.

Miss Diego was engaged in holding Smith and Jones. Her methods were timeworn but effective. She screamed, kicked, bit and clawed. When she saw Pug running toward her with the revolver in his hand she cried: "It is not papa! It is Signor Pug!" and fainted in Mr. Jones' arms.

"Wonderful girl," whispered Pug.

* * * *

MR. SMITH, sucking his left hand where Miss Diego's sharp, white teeth had left a mark, with his right wrestled with his revolver. The shot went wild, but Pug stumbled and fell, headling, face down in the dust of the Porto Bio road. Face down, but with one eye free for observation. He saw the valorous Mr. Smith advancing upon him, chest arched, full of pride and confidence.

"He is dead," Mr. Smith whispered, showing his teeth. With the tip of his patent leather boot he poked Pug gently. It was but the matter of an instant to trip him, to deprive him of his pretty gun and to sit upon his chest.

"Cock Robin," said Pug, tweaking Mr. Smith's nose, "your little arrow is in my pocket. I am now going after Mr. Jones. Be good."

Whereupon Miss Diego recovered consciousness and captured Mr. Jones herself.

"It was of a simplicity," she confessed later. "When I saw you, my Pug, approach, so calm, so brave, I distracted from you the attention of this ferocious Signor Jones. I have nails of the sharpest. Behold, I scratched. Men are strange creatures, heart of my heart. They will brave a lion in the den. But an angry woman makes cowards of them all."

Dawn had broken over Magella when the priest at Barrios was awekened to officiate at the wedding of a dishevelled American and a very tired, very pretty, very merry young lady. There were three witnesses—one tall, one short, and one not so short—who gave their names as Signor Smith, Signor Jones, and Signor Brown, all from New York.

As Miss Diego said, it was an affair of sufficient grandeur. The sun came out of the sea and lighted their happiness. The bells of the little church of Barrios rang gladly overhead. Robins sang and a parrot gave lively tongue in a ciba tree nearby. Only the three witnesss seemed not to feel the romance of the glorious morn. They groaned and felt with gingerly fingers the scratches which decorated their cheeks. The priest at Barrios wondered. But he was a simple man and knew love when it spoke from the eyes of a man and a woman. So he married and blessed them and offered them to drink of his best vino blanco.

A schooner lay just off the beach and a rowboat waited in shallow water. The priest of Barrios, when speaking of these strange things afterwards, always shook his head. "They came with the dawn and into the face of the dawn they sailed away again. A small boat took them to the schooner. Sail was hoisted and in the fresh wind of that glorious morning they vanished down the path of the sun—the bride, the groom and the wounded wedding guests. I stood on the beach, my hand shading my eyes. Figlio mio, to this day I wonder whether it was some dream of mine. . . . I watched. And presently from the direction of the capital—as is usual—the ship of the American Company steamed into my vision. Slowly she advanced and swiftly the schooner raced to meet her. They met. A great puff of black smoke from the funnels of the big ship smirched the sky—and there, halfway to the mouth of the harbor, she stopped. For a moment she stopped. I swear to this; then she moved on again, leaving that schooner tossing in her wake! Had she taken the strangers aboard? Or did they return to Magella with the sailing vessel? I know not. Figlio mio—I have only one proof of their reality. Behold! An American gold piece of unknown denomination. What think you?"

* * * *

THE wireless operator at the Capo was equally curious. On that morning when the Rough Rider slipped past the Isola di Sabbia into the open sea, a radio message was received for the American consul. It ran:

"I am on board Rough Rider northward bound Mrs. Fairchild and the bad debt with me break the news to his nibs gosh how happy we are."

An hour later, still puzzled, the wireless operator at the Capo sent a message speeding after the Rough Rider. The smudge of smoke from her funnels still lay upon the horizon, but she herself had gone. The message ran:

"Lovers, go you with God.

"Diego."

And so the shutter closes. But for an instant, before the vision fades, we see a steamer hurrying up the sea. Leaning on the rail, looking back at the misty outlines of the fabulous Christinas, the laughing Signor Pug and the merry Miss Diego—Vaya con Dios. Fade out!

(Copyright.)
Printed by arrangement with Metropolitan Newspaper Service and The Washington Star.

"BEHOLD! I SCRATCHED. MEN WILL BRAVE A LION, BUT AN ANGRY WOMAN MAKES COWARDS OF THEM ALL."

"HOW MUCH HAVE YOU LOST, MR. PRESIDENT?" PUG DEMANDED. "I REFUSED TO PAY!" DIEGO SHOUTED.

Wedding Anniversaries

By Ring Lardner.

TO THE EDITOR: The other day I was reading the calendar and it says in it that this is June and it come to me all of a sudden that that was the month when I once got married so I looked up the date and seen where it was this coming Tuesday, so as soon as they was a lull I says to the Mrs. that next Tuesday would be our wedding anniversary and it seems like she all ready knew it and says yes it will be our 10th anniversary which she couldn't remember whether that was the tin wedding or the wooden wedding, so I looked it up in the book and it says it is the tin wedding and I asked her what was she going to give me and she says she hadn't made up her mind, and I says I hoped it wouldn't be the tin can, so she burst out laughing and I may of smiled myself.

Well the book gives all the different anniversarys and it says they was named with regards to what was considered the most suitable present for the husband to give their wife on such and such an anniversary, like the 75th. yr. you been married is the diamond anniversary and it is suitable to give the Mrs. a diamond necklace or tiara so as she can make a showing the next time she is asked out to a toddle party. Now days, however, it ain't only the husband that is suppose to give the wife a present but the both of them gives something to the other and their friends is also expected to come acrost with presents for the 2 of them, so on acct. of this being the time of yr. when a great many of my readers was married themselfs or have got friends that was, I will write down the names of the different anniversarys along with a few suggestions for presents that don't run up into big money.

1 yr. (Paper)

THEY'S no more tasty gift for a man to give your wife than a pretty cigar band and he can also suspend the rules that day and give her a chance at the morning paper, a specially if she can read. If the anniversary comes in the winter time, the Mrs. can give her husband a part of wife flowers till they been married 7 yrs. why they's no sence to starting the habit then as she realizes how easy it is to get along without them.

10 yrs. (Tin)

THIS is the one that I am up vs. at the present time and the way the old bank acct. is it looks like she would be lucky to get a used sardine can, but if a person has got plenty to spend, say $800 or $850, why they can do a lot worse than get one of them things that is made in Detroit with a sedan body to go shopping around the village or take the kiddies to school.

12 yrs. (Linen)

Anything that ain't tore is acceptable by this time.

15 yrs. (Crystal)

Some authoritys recommends a crystal ball but when a couple have been married 15 yrs. the most of them hasn't got no future. A cut glass vinegar bowl or a new bulb for the dining rm. light is as good as anything else.

20 yrs. (China)

A hand-painted Easter egg for the madam and a cuspidor or mustach cup for the man.

25 yrs. (Silver)

At this mile stone in the matrimonial seas I can't think of no more welcome gift for either party than a dime dated the yr. they was married or any other yr.

30 yrs. (Pearl)

Pearls comes too high for most couples that has been married that long to even consider them, but I know one husband that got around it with a very pretty idear. On the night of his 30th anniversary he took the Mrs. down town to dinner and ordered her a ½ dozen raw oysters. She didn't find no pearls but that wasn't his fault.

35 yrs. (Coral)

They's nothing as tasty for either party as a nice reef.

50 yrs. (Golden)

Teeth for both partys.

75 yrs. (Diamond)

If the husband gives the wife a tiara why the lease she can do is present him with a pr. of diamond studed beard fasteners to wear to the ball.

"IF A PERSON HAS PLENTY TO SPEND, WHY THEY CAN DO A LOT WORSE THAN ONE OF THEM THINGS MADE IN DETROIT."

last Sunday's paper to rap around him under his vest when he goes out.

2 yrs. (Straw)

If the wife is a pipe smoker a couple of broom straws will come in handy. The husband will appreciate an individual drinking straw that can be carried in a case as it often happens that when 2 men goes to the ball game and orders pop, the salesman is libel to give them 2 bottles and 1 straw with the remark that this is the last straw.

3 yrs. (Candy)

Any assorted candys is O. K. but I know of one husband and wife that had a good laugh at the other's expense on their candy anniversary as the husband give the wife a piece of nut candy and says it was on acct. of she being a nut, so she says all right here is an all day sucker for you.

4 yrs. (Leather)

A neat gift for the husband is a leather bill folder that he can carry his Elks' card and cigar coupons inside it. Or a belt so as all the strain won't be on the suspenders. A pr. of shoes is O. K. for the wife if she is use to them, and even if she ain't she may be able to get some good out of just the laces as they's many a time when she needs tying up somewheres.

5 yrs. (Wooden)

They's hardly any limit to the wooden presents that can be give a married couple. The things a man most generally always needs is a match or a toothpick or a garage or a new leg, wile the wife will appreciate some dry kindling or a handsome skewer.

7 yrs. (Floral)

If a man don't begin giveing their husband bunches of flowers by the time they been married 7 yrs. he might as well not start in at all.

The book don't say nothing about no 100th anniversary, but I suppose its radium and you just give him a couple of drops and leave the recipients have them set the way they want them. RING W. LARDNER.

Great Neck, June 24.

(Copyright, 1921, by the Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

"THE SEVENTY-FIFTH YEAR YOU BEEN MARRIED IS THE DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY, AND IT IS SUITABLE TO GIVE THE MRS. A DIAMOND NECKLACE OR TIARA, SO THAT SHE CAN MAKE A SHOWING AT THE NEXT TODDLE PARTY."

"EARTH-LIGHT"

IN studying the amount of light in the sky on a starlit night, one scientist has reached the interesting conclusion that the luminosity of the sky is caused partly by direct starlight and partly by some other source of light. This latter he proposes to call "earth-light," and he suggests that it may be due to a permanent aurora attending the earth.

The light is variable, not only on different nights, but at different hours of the same night. He has found it to be from seven to fifteen times the amount of mean starlight, but it is believed that this ratio is exceptional, and does not prevail everywhere. Some observations indicate that the light had its origin close to the surface of the earth. It has been suggested that it may have a similar origin to that of the light emitted by the coma of a comet.

The Indian Name.

EARLY European settlers along the Atlantic coast of North America made strange use of the word "Indian." That word was a mistake in its application to the natives whom the European explorers found here. The first expedition of Columbus was fitted out to seek a new route to India. The roundness of the earth had become established in the minds of progressive and imaginative men, and it was a simple bit of reasoning that by sailing west from Europe the ship would come to India if it sailed far enough. An intervening continent seems not to have been in the thoughts of the navigators. Therefore, when after many days of travel westward Columbus and his crews came to a land peopled by a dark-skinned race they assumed that the Indies had been reached by the western route, and that the people were Indians. And the natives found here continued to be called Indians.

Our ancestors turned the noun "Indian" into an adjective qualifying many nouns. For one thing they invented "Indian summer," meaning warm spell after frosts. That season was known in Europe. There it was called All Hallow's summer, St. Luke's summer and St. Martin's summer, depending whether it followed All Hallow's or All Saints' day, which was November 1, or St. Luke's day, which was October 18; or St. Martin's day, which was November 11. Many theories have been spun to explain the phrase "Indian summer." One probability is that it meant a false summer, that is, a season which seemed like summer, but was not. The word "Indian" was prefixed to many things which were not what they appeared to be. For example, we have a plant which is called "Indian tobacco." Everybody knows and everybody knew that Indians cultivated tobacco and smoked it.

Yet the term "Indian tobacco" was given to a plant that is not tobacco, but which is a member of the lobelia family and is a common plant in dry fields and thickets in the tobacco growing regions of the United States. Then, there is the "Indian cigar" which grows on the catalpa tree. Indians did not smoke this and there is even doubt that the catalpa is native to America. There is also "Indian turnip." It is not a turnip, but is the root of that familiar plant popularly called Jack-in-the-pulpit. There is no record that the Indians ate this root, and it is really inedible. It was given the name "Indian turnip" because it looked somewhat like a turnip, and generations after the name had been applied the assumption arose that Indians ate it.

There is also "Indian plantain," a European weed that the early immigrants brought over and which has overspread the United States; "Indian pipe," a flower which suggests a pipe, and "Indian pink," a wild flower which, so far as known, was of no use to Indians. Many other plants have the prefix Indian, among them being "Indian grass," "Indian hemp," "Indian mustard" and "Indian paint brush."